

about the program so we've been reticent to give those numbers out. The thing is a failure where it started and Senator Bohlke is trying to lead us down the primrose path because that's where Governor Nelson wants to put us. I favor Senator Dierks' amendment.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Would recognize a group of third and fourth graders from Bradshaw School, with their teachers, in the north balcony. Would you please stand and be recognized. On the Dierks amendment, we have Senators Crosby, Day, Beutler, Schimek, Pirsch, Jensen, Bohlke, Lindsay and Chambers.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, thank you, Senator Dierks, for bringing this amendment because I have said from day one on 1224, whenever it was we started, and I'm pleased to talk about it again. I think we have to continue to talk about these issues that...that are in this bill that make it such a terrible bill, from my point of view. I'm going to quote from Luke, Chapter 23, Verses 28 and 29. When the women in Jerusalem were following Christ when he was carrying the cross, he said to them, and they were crying, daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but for yourselves and for your children for the days will come where they will say, blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne and the paps that have not given suck. My point about that is, is what we're saying here we are trying to shame these women when they have another baby after they've gone on welfare and say, you don't deserve to have a baby, you may not have a baby, you are not...you're poor, you may not have a baby. So we're going to punish her for having the baby. We're going to punish the baby for existing. For me, that is simply not a good way to look at a problem that we have. We all know that we have to take care of the women who...and the children, who are in desperate straits. We've argued about this and argued and argued and you keep handing out these things about other states and the welfare queens and so on, I'm talking about Nebraska. And when you look at those numbers, and Senator Dierks quoted them again, in the first place, the numbers on welfare have gone down. In the second place, the average time that a woman in Nebraska is on welfare is 18 months. So I cannot understand why we are so agitated and why we think that taking away the welfare benefits from a woman who has a baby after she goes on welfare will solve all our problems, budgetwise and otherwise. It will not. I think it's a mean thing to do. I just do not believe that the